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THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 13 October 1998 from the Permanent Representatives of the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit herewith the texts of the Joint Communiqué on the results of the State visit by the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. B. N. Yeltsin, to Uzbekistan, and of the Joint Statement of the Presidents of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation on the situation in Afghanistan, adopted on 12 October 1998 (see annexes I and II).

We should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 45 and 93, and of the Security Council.

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ANNEX I

Joint Communiqué issued on 12 October 1998 on the results of the State visit to Uzbekistan by the President of the Russian Federation, B. N. Yeltsin

On 11 and 12 October 1998, a State visit of the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. B. N. Yeltsin, to Uzbekistan took place at the invitation of the President of Uzbekistan, Mr. I. A. Karimov.

Mr. Karimov and Mr. Yeltsin held talks in which they reviewed the status of and prospects for the development of Russian-Uzbek relations, as well as urgent international and regional problems. The talks took place in the atmosphere of friendship, mutual understanding and constructiveness that is traditional for meetings of the leaders of the two countries.

The Heads of State confirmed that the multifaceted cooperation between Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation, conducted in accordance with the Treaty on foundations for inter-State relations, friendship and cooperation of 30 May 1992 and the Declaration on the development and intensification of all-round cooperation of 2 March 1994, is based on the principles of equality, mutual confidence and respect for national sovereignty.

They noted with satisfaction that Uzbek-Russian relations have recently been characterized by a strengthening of strategic partnership and have become increasingly dynamic. They expressed the deep conviction that Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation will continue in future to move along the road of ever-closer and more intensive cooperation.

An important practical step in this respect was the signing of the Treaty between Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation on the intensification of economic cooperation over the period 1998-2007, and the approval of the related programme of action, which open up new long-term prospects for mutually advantageous development of trade, cooperation in the field of production, investment and scientific and technical cooperation in key areas and direct links between regions and economic agents.

The Presidents called for a stepping up of the activity of the Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation.

The Russian side remains interested in opening consular offices in Uzbekistan, and confirms its readiness to take into account possible similar desires on the part of the Uzbek side.

The two sides agreed to give further consideration to the possibility of signing documents on the legal status of nationals of one country permanently resident in the territory of the other country and on regulation of the process of resettlement, and of protecting the rights of immigrants, and using labour resources and migration of the labour force.

A package of intergovernmental and interdepartmental agreements supplementing and improving the treaty basis for bilateral relations was also signed in the context of the visit.

In discussing foreign policy problems, the Heads of the two States called for an intensification of cooperation and for closer coordination of efforts in the interests of ensuring international peace, stability and security at the regional and global levels.

A Declaration on all-round cooperation among Uzbekistan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan was signed. Mr. Karimov and Mr. Yeltsin were in agreement that this document will play an important role in strengthening relations of strategic partnership and equitable and mutually advantageous cooperation among the three States, and will be an effective instrument for ensuring peace, security and stability in the region. The Presidents confirmed the intention of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation to continue cooperation with the United Nations, other international organizations and the guarantor States in promoting the peace process in Tajikistan on the basis of comprehensive implementation of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in that country, and also of its economic recovery and development. In this context, the Presidents called on the parties involved in the settlement process to manifest good will and State wisdom and to cooperate constructively within the Commission on National Reconciliation.

Mr. Karimov and Mr. Yeltsin expressed serious concern at the situation in Afghanistan and the negative consequences and escalation of the inter-Afghan armed confrontation may have for the Central Asian States and the Russian Federation. A joint statement of the Presidents of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation on the situation in Afghanistan was adopted, and is being published in the press (see annex II).

The Presidents of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation noted the urgency of improving the activity of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and of reforming its structures and mechanisms taking into account the interest of all parties in CIS, the experience that has been gained and the new political and economic realities within the Commonwealth. They call for a continuation of the committed search for joint solutions within the special inter-State forum of CIS.

They expressed the conviction that the fruitful results of the State visit of the President of the Russian Federation to Uzbekistan will be a milestone in opening up new possibilities for the expansion and intensification of Russian-Uzbek cooperation.

Mr. Yeltsin expressed gratitude to the leadership and people of Uzbekistan for the warm welcome extended to him, and invited the President of Uzbekistan, Mr. I. A. Karimov, to visit the Russian Federation. The invitation was gratefully accepted. The time of the visit will be agreed upon at a later date.

ANNEX II

Joint declaration by the Presidents of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation on the situation in Afghanistan

The Presidents of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation expressed serious concern at the situation in Afghanistan and the possible negative consequences for the Central Asian States and the Russian Federation of an escalation in the inter-Afghan armed confrontation.

The Presidents consider that the main cause for the continuation of this fratricidal war is the position of the "Taliban" Movement, which openly disregards the relevant resolutions of the United Nations containing the fundamental principles for a comprehensive political settlement of the Afghan conflict, including Security Council resolution 1193 (1998) of 28 August 1998.

Interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan by certain outside forces and the establishment in that country of an extremist regime which brutally tramples on human rights and protects terrorism and drug trafficking create a direct threat to the sovereign borders of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The Presidents again confirm their conviction of the need to maintain Afghanistan as a sovereign, independent, unified State, a full member of the international community and a good neighbour to other States.

To this end, Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation are prepared to cooperate closely at the bilateral and multilateral levels and to participate actively in the efforts being undertaken by the United Nations to channel the intra-Afghan armed conflict into a course of peaceful political solutions that are acceptable to all Afghans.

In particular, the Heads of State attach great importance to consultations within the "Group of friends and neighbours of Afghanistan" (the "six plus two" group), and support the provisions of the agreed document on the results of the meeting of the Group at the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs in New York on 21 September 1998.

The Presidents support the proposal that the next meeting of this Group should be held in Tashkent with the participation of representatives of the various Afghan forces with a view to jointly developing possible ways of achieving a political solution to the Afghan conflict.

The Presidents call on the "Taliban" Movement and other influential Afghan forces both within the country and outside it to engage in constructive dialogue in the interests of preserving Afghan statehood and achieving a stable peace and an economic and cultural renaissance on Afghan soil.

In order to ensure this solution to the Afghan problem, there is a need for the immediate halting of all military actions in the territory of Afghanistan, the adoption and unconditional implementation by all the neighbours of the

Islamic State of Afghanistan and by other States of their obligations not to permit the delivery from or through their territory of arms and military equipment to any of the parties to the conflict, the prevention of any interference in intra-Afghan affairs and the formation of a broadly representative government with the participation of the various ethnic groups and political movements.

The Presidents emphasize that they cannot remain indifferent to the dangerous situation that is taking shape in and around Afghanistan, and will take all necessary appropriate measures.

The Presidents express the conviction that time and opportunities for a political settlement of the Afghan conflict have not yet been exhausted. Reason and good will must prevail.

I. A. KARIMOV
President of Uzbekistan

B. N. YELTSIN
President of the Russian Federation